

# ● Do You Need a Mentor?

## ● Ask yourself...

- Why do you want to find a mentor?
- What skills do you want to improve?
- What position do you want to attain?
- What new opportunities do you want to uncover?
- What SPECIFIC skills, knowledge, and traits does your mentor need to be able to help you?

# ● Seek a mentor who...

- Respects you, your aspirations, and your skill set
- Wants to actively listen to your concerns and needs, and guide you to a solution that you can implement
- Has the time and commitment to be there with and for you
- Doesn't see mentoring as an opportunity for an ego trip or a bully pulpit
- Can analyze issues and problems and co-invent solutions -- NOT dictate answers.
- Has the skills , knowledge and connections that are related to your aspirations.

# ● Finding a mentor...

If you want to seek out a mentor yourself, think about:

- Who are some people you know, either directly or indirectly, that fit the description?
- For each person you have listed, ask yourself why this person would be a good mentor? Why would this person NOT be a good mentor?
- Now go and get 'em. Put together your strategy for contacting and explaining to your potential mentor:
  - Why you are looking for a mentor
  - Why you think they are the perfect fit -- be complimentary and factual
  - What you are willing to commit to in the relationship.

# ● Help a mentor to find you!

- List the organizations, departments in your company, other companies, or professional associations that have access to people with the qualifications to be your mentor.
- Define your strategy for contacting these organizations and finding out if they have a mentoring program.
- Put together a compelling story of your aspirations and what you are looking for in a mentor.
- Find people to help introduce you, if you need it.

# ● So what's a protégé's role?



Be open, be flexible, and be willing to learn, learn, and learn

- Commit yourself to being a terrific and worthwhile protégé by being:
  - Committed to taking the time to listen and follow up on your mentor's advice
  - Open to dialoguing and listening to your mentor
  - Prepared with your list of questions and aspirations and be open and able to trust that your mentor is there for you
  - Open, candid, and honest with yourself and your mentor
  - Generous with offering thanks and acknowledgement of your mentor's guidance
  - Sensitive to the notion *that what you do and how you do it reflects on you as well as your mentor.*



# Resources

Explore these links for more information:

- Cnnfn.com [Find a mentor](#) "Great Idea': Hook up with someone you admire - and who admires you"
- Fast Company [Mentors Wanted](#) "Rules for maneuvering the mentoring road."

Check out these books:

- [\*Making the Most of Being Mentored : How to Grow from a Mentoring Partnership\*](#) by Gordon F. Shea
- [\*Mentoring : The Most Obvious Yet Overlooked Key to Achieving More in Life Than You Ever Dreamed Possible : A Success Guide for Mentors and Proteges\*](#) by Floyd Wickman and Terri Sjodin
- [\*Mentoring : Confidence in Finding a Mentor & Becoming One\*](#) by Bobb Biehl

# The role of a mentor

The key to all mentoring is to remember that the *actions are taken by the protégé*, while the mentor offers the guidance.

## Mentoring means...

- Seeking out a protege who has the ability to be very good or GREAT in an area where you are already skilled and knowledgeable.
- Guiding your protégé respectfully by listening, dialoguing, planning, questioning, opening doors, and providing opportunities for the protégé to shine and be visible.
- Allowing your protege to grow and expand, and even surpass your skills and abilities.
- Actively listening to your protégé's needs, and -- by using these needs as a basis -- guiding your protégé to craft a plan of action to address those needs.
- Committing the time and effort required by your protégé for success.
- Pushing, challenging, and helping your protégé to do the work required for success.

## Mentoring does *not* mean..

- Jumping in and rescuing a protégé in trouble.
- Looking for adulation, praise or ego fulfillment through your protégé.
- Spreading yourself so thin that you can't be present and helpful.
- Making promises you can't keep.

# ● Finding a Protege

BE OPEN! Proteges can come from business, civic, or social interactions.

- To find a protégé, start by asking yourself the following questions:
  - What do you want to gain by mentoring?
  - What do you want to give by mentoring?
  - What skill set or experience do you have that you want to share and help others gain?
  - What are the characteristics of the perfect protégé for you in terms of skills, aspirations, career function, location, and so on?
  - Who are mentors you have known, and what qualities made them either great or ineffective? What have you learned from this that you can carry forward to make you successful as a mentor?
  - Based on all of the above, what venue best allows for the best match? Is it a civic, business, or social venue? Examples include associations, the Better Business Bureau, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, the chamber of commerce, Elks Club, Jaycees, PTA, Rotary, and your company.



# Resources

Explore these links for more information:

- Fast Company [\*Women's Ways Of Mentoring\*](#) “Call it "wo-mentoring"-- a new approach that's more about commitment and learning than about chemistry and power. And, by the way, it also works for men.”
- Fast Company [\*Radical Mentoring\*](#) “The cofounder and CEO of iVillage on tough mentoring.”
- Fast Company [\*What My Mentor Taught Me\*](#) “Stories about motivation, interviews, style, and confidence from four mentees.”

Check out these books:

- [\*The Art of Mentoring: Lead, Follow and Get Out of the Way\*](#) by Shirley Peddy
- [\*A Mentor's Companion\*](#) by Larry Ambrose
- [\*Coaching : Evoking Excellence in Others\*](#) by James Flaherty